

**Southeast Oregon Resource Advisory Council (SEORAC/RAC) Meeting
Final Minutes May 27, 2003
Summer Lake, OR**

RAC Members Present:	Group Number:	Federal Officials Present:
Ken Bentz	1	Dave Henderson, DFO BLM
Dick Leever	1	Steve Ellis Lakeview BLM
Tom Harris	1	Joan Suther, Acting for Tom Dyer, Burns BLM-
John Bishop	2	Carolyn Wisdom acting for Karen Shimamoto, Fremont/ Winema NF
Mike Golden	2	Peggy Diegan, BLM note taker
Bob Kinchey	2	
Jill Workman	2	
Chad Boyd	3	
Marylyn Miller	3	
Jane O'Keeffe	3	
Walt Van Dyke	3	
Absent:		
<i>Jim Campbell</i>	1	<i>Roger Williams , FS Malheur National Forest</i>
<i>Cecil Dick</i>	3	
<i>Lee Belnap</i>	2	
<i>Mark Ferns</i>	1	
Guests:		
<i>Anita Bilbao</i>	<i>Debra Lyons</i>	
<i>Bill Aney</i>	<i>Tom Rasmussen</i>	
<i>Gretchen Burris</i>		

JILL WORKMAN, RAC CHAIR

- Opened the meeting at 8:00 am with self- introductions.

MINUTES

Jill Workman

- Jill reviewed the previous meeting minutes.
- After some minor corrections, Walt Van Dyke moved and Marilyn Miller seconded that the minutes be approved as corrected.
- Minutes were approved with agreed upon corrections.

JOINT OR/WA RAC MEETING

Jill Workman

- Joint OR/WA RAC meeting is the 22-24 of September at Kahneeta on the Warm Springs Indian Reservation near Madras, OR.
 - The 24th will be a business meeting for the Southeast Oregon RAC.
 - Field trip planned for the 23rd to OMSI Camp Hancock.
 - John Tanaka (Chair of the John Day/Snake RAC is in charge of putting the meeting together.
 - Chad Boyd is working with the other RACs on the meeting agenda.

- Suggested agenda items:
 - Sagegrouse issues are high on the list.
 - Suggestion to have Jon Sadowski, Wildlife Biologist from the Vale BLM District come to the meeting to give a report on Sagegrouse issues.
 - RAC counterparts need to have time to meet together.
 - Good time to talk about types of interaction between the public and other RACs.
 - RACs report on what they do and how they do it.
 - OHV overlapping issues-RS2477-Recordable Disclaimer.
 - Weeds overlapping issues.
 - SWL

WASHINGTON DC NATIONAL RAC MEETING

Jill Workman

- Attended the National RAC chair meeting in April 2003 in Washington DC.
 - Representatives from all 23 RACs attended this meeting.
 - Kathleen Clark was unable to meet with the RAC.
 - Fran Cherry, WO chaired the meeting.
 - Rebecca Watson, Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management at the Department of the Interior listened to everyone's comments, suggestions, and complaints.
 - Appoints to the RACs are not being approved in a timely manner.
 - Some pending nominations were approved after RAC Chairs expressed their dissatisfaction to Rebecca Watson.
 - Some RACs expressed problems with getting per diem paid for attending meetings.
 - Not this RAC.
 - Extensive discussion on weeds.
 - Some RACs felt that they were not as effective as they should be because of lack of a quorum in meetings.
 - There seems to be a strong administration commitment to the RACs.
 - All RACs expressed concern of not getting to preview the new Grazing Regulations.
 - One of the reasons that the RACs were created was to review this type of regulation change.
 - A National RAC website is being created with links to the local websites.
 - RAC Chairs would like these annual meetings to continue.
 - Twinkle Thompson, the new National RAC coordinator will be located in Phoenix, AZ.
 - RAC Chairs discussed the use of subgroups versus not using subgroups to come up with recommendations.
 - Subgroups were not used in some RACs because of lack of trust between members.
 - OHV issues were discussed.
 - Fire issues were discussed.
 - A California RAC had meetings cancelled because of budget issues.

- This should not happen in the future because WO earmarks dollars in district budgets to cover the RACs.
- Competitive sourcing issues were discussed.
- Discussion about the new logo that is coming out for the BLM.
 - RACs expressed concern with the cost of changing signs.
 - RACs did not feel that a new logo would change the BLM image.
 - The National Budget Team recommended using dollars for work on the ground instead of for a new BLM logo.
 - In Oregon the BLM image would be greatly improved by gathering horses instead of getting a new logo.
 - Currently BLM is hauling water to wild horses and burros because there is not enough dollars to gather these animals.
- Folks are spending up to 25 % of their time on the outsourcing issues-this is not cost effective.
- RAC Chairs expressed concern that politicians in Washington D.C. do not understand what is needed in the field.
- End of meeting the RAC Chairs got to write comments.
 - Jill suggested that the RAC chairs be involved in creating the agenda for the next national meeting.
 - Annual work plans were discussed among the RAC Chairs and these discussions were not included in the formal meeting.
 - Management planning process also was discussed.
 - Scott Florence, WO came to the meeting and asked Jill to join him in letting folks know how the SEOR-RAC comes up with suggestions and recommendations.
 - Formed subcommittees to work on issues to come up with better suggestions and recommendations.
- Good time to interact with other RAC Chairs, giving WO folks a better look at what is happening on the ground.
- RACs can be advocates where funding is needed.
- If BLM does not understand the issues, the public cannot be expected to understand either.

PLANNING UPDATE OF THE STEENS/ANDREWS MANAGEMENT PLAN

Joan Suther

- Preliminary draft was delivered to involved groups such as SMAC, SEO-RAC, and cooperating agencies.
- No comments were received from this RAC.
 - The draft has been out for a month; this RACs members received a copy just this last week.
- Deadline for getting comments in will be extended for the SEOR-RAC.
- Comments can be sent to Joan Suther, Tom Dyer, or Gary Foulkes.
- By end of August the draft will go to state office for printing then there will be a 90 day comment period that will end in December.
- Cooperating agencies have signed Memoranda of Understanding (MOU).
- Key issues are transportation and recreation.
- Transportation deals with the grazing permittees, and private landowners.

- Environmental Assessments on access are not out yet.
- Remedial actions still not clear.
- Act clearly says we will continue with historic use.

RELEVANCY OF SUBCOMMITTEES

Jill Workman

- North Lake Recreation Plan
 - Dick Leever-still have a lot of work to do with a diverse number of issues.
 - Timeline on plan-on going for the next 1-2 years.
 - Gretchen Burris-in a holding pattern until the Record of Decision is signed.
 - Birch Creek Management Plan.
 - Subcommittee field tour following this meeting.
 - Comments will be brought back to the full RAC committee in September.
 - Then the subgroup will/may not need to exist after this.
 - Vale District Wildland Fire Management Forum
 - Discussion today talking about developing a regular subgroup by charter to help with this.
 - Still need to determine what the rules should be.
 - Should be completed by the September meeting.
 - Rangeland Health Assessment.
 - Completed a letter to the BLM OR State Director.
 - Need additional issues to work on.
 - Sagegrouse Subcommittee
 - Waiting for Walt VanDyke to get the draft plan done.
 - Lot of energy on the committee.
 - Some states are further along than others are.
 - Oregon waiting for funding.

DECISION: Jill Workman and Chad Boyd volunteered to work on the annual work plan for the RAC.

DECISION: Chad Boyd and Marilyn Miller volunteered to review the Steens/Andrews RMP when it comes out this fall.

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS/REPORTS:

North Lake Recreation Plan	Jane O'Keeffe, Marilyn Miller, Dick Leever, Lee Belknap, and Tom Harris
Birch Creek Management Plan	Marilyn Miller, Jill Workman, John Bishop, Mike Golden and Jim Campbell
Vale District Wildland Fire Management Forum	Walt Van Dyke, Bob Kindschy, John Bishop and Mark Ferns
Rangeland Health Assessment BLM All	Walt Van Dyke, Jill Workman, Chad Boyd and Ken Bentz

NORTH LAKE RECREATION PLAN SUBCOMMITTEE

Dick Leever

- North Lake Recreation Plan is ongoing.
- Funding may be available in North Lake County to help with priorities in the area.

- RAC will see first hand some of the issues/conflicts on the field trip on 5/28/2003 to Christmas Valley.
- Gretchen Burris-passed out the agenda for the field trip on 5/28/2003.
 - A number of issues will be addressed by the tour including RMP road issues and OHV issues.
 - Green Mountain (included in the late afternoon tour) northwest of Christmas Valley will give a nice overview of the basin.

VALE DISTRICT WILDLAND FIRE MANAGEMENT FORUM

Walt Van Dyke

- Vale District needs help in putting together a District Wildland Fire Forum.
 - Recommend the RAC form a local subgroup to look at this.
 - Subgroup could include Watershed Council, Grazing Board, Sheriff Office, Cattleman Association, ODF and at least one RAC member.
 - Rational for this is to try to diffuse some of the problems between agencies and with the public when we have a wildfire.

DECISION: Walt VanDyke moved that the RAC seat a local subgroup to serve on the Wildfire Forum. Forum is to have at least one RAC member. Ken Bentz seconded-motion passed.

- RAC member Walt VanDyke works for ODFW.
- RAC member John Bishop is on the Malheur Watershed Council.
- Forum membership and charter to be worked out at the September meeting.

BIRCH CREEK MANAGEMENT PLAN SUBCOMMITTEE

Jill Workman

- Because of the scheduled field trip to Birch Creek on 5/29-30/2003 this committee will bring a final recommendation document to the September meeting for RAC approval.

RANGELAND HEALTH ASSESSMENT BLM SUBCOMMITTEE

Jill Workman

- Subcommittee wrote letter and subcommittee is disbanded.
- Jill will review the existing list of issues that the BLM and FS want the RAC to provide recommendations.
 - Issues for future RAC involvement.
 - Include issues that are important and not necessarily an emergency.
 - RAC wants to be brought in early to diffuse issues.
- RACs were involved in the implementation of Standards and Guides
- One issue involved is the wild horse program funding issue and the impact of how it affects wildlife.
 - Joint RAC meeting in September provides an opportunity to put a letter together to endorse concerns.
 - Mike Golden will draft the letter to present to the group.
 - John Bishop will present letter at the meeting for this RAC.
 - Combining the energies of the three RACs would have more impact and can help effect change.
- Steens/Andrews portion of the RMP out of this RACs area of jurisdiction.

- Karla Bird is the lead this and RAC can come up with comments in the September meeting to be voted on at the December meeting.
- This would be created at the September meeting.
- Have until end of October to get the comments into Karla Bird, Andrews Field Manager.
- Need to have a subcommittee meeting before the December meeting.
- Wild Horses and Burro issues along with the weed issues would be an opportunity for the joint RACs to work together on recommendations and suggestions.

RAC ANNUAL WORKPLAN SUBCOMMITTEE

Jill Workman

- Looking at additions to the final work plan.
 - Need to have a process annually to make this a reoccurring agenda item.
 - Need to have an annual review of the work plan.
 - Need side boards on language on prioritizing the work list.
 - At the annual meeting for setting meeting dates the annual work plan needs to be completed and sent to the OR BLM State Director.
 - Need more FS issues.
- Some of the RAC terms are up and the application conference call is on May 30 to select the nominations.
 - We have to go out and recruit for Jim Campbell's position.
 - Three year RAC member rotation.
 - Last meeting for current members and the Vale District Designated Federal Official (DFO), Dave Henderson is in September.
 - Beginning in October, Lakeview District Manager, Steve Ellis will be the DFO for this RAC for the next two years.
- Current charter expires in December.
 - Cannot have subcommittee meetings after the September deadline unless the new nominations have been selected or meetings after December if the charter has not been approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- No public comment.

DECISION: Mike Golden moved that the RAC send a strong letter to the BLM to reconsider initiating a new logo. The RAC considers this new logo to be frivolous and would rather see this money spent on existing programs. Marilyn Miller seconded-motion passed.

****Dave to follow up with Jill Workman and Mike Golden on letter to the BLM to reconsider initiating a new logo.***

SUSTAINING WORKING LANDSCAPES ON FEDERAL LANDS

Debra Lyons-PowerPoint presentation

- Background on the concepts for Four Cs Grazing Administration including the schedule for the rulemaking and policy processes.
- In August the RACs will get the draft policy and these will need to be back in by September with comments.

- Written comments will be accepted at the September meeting. See handout #1.
- Suggestion from Jill Workman-Need to look at the RACs advising other Department of Interior agencies.

ROUNDTABLE: ALL RAC MEMBERS AND FEDERAL OFFICIALS

Joan Suther

- Review of planned wild horse gathers and drought conditions.
 - Gather schedule is to be done in September to limit loss of foals.
 - Overall adoptions are expected to be down by 30% for the year.
 - Water hauling is now being done in Lakeview and may be needed in other HMAs.
 - Drought in Oregon is not as bad as other states therefore; other states may get more funding for emergency gathers.
 - Need to work with Congress in the long term to develop solutions.
 - Looking at different kinds of marketing.
 - Need more research on fertility control.
 - Need to reduce length of time horses are in holding facilities.
 - 15,000 Head are in BLM or long term holding facilities.
 - Generally these are older un-adoptable horses.
 - It costs approximately 2 dollars per day per horse.
 - Need to look at new ways of doing business.

Bill Aney

- Last summers fire-planning project started last fall-EA is done.
 - Decision scheduled to come out this coming Thursday.
 - Salvaging 2,000 acres and replanting of 1,800 acres.
- Helicopter logging needs to be done this fall.
- Sale should be completed by the middle of July.

Carolyn Wisdom for Karen Shimamoto

- Toolbox Fire Recovery Project Draft EIS should be released in August or September.
 - Alternatives range from zero acres treated to 14,441 acres treated.
 - The amount of timber salvage proposed in the alternatives ranges from zero board feet to 73.3 million board feet.
 - The project (not just the timber salvage part) is expected to be implemented in Spring 2004.
 - Trees 14 inches or less in diameter may not be viable to sell by that time
 - 69-70 miles of roads decommission and 70 miles of road closed are being analyzed by this DEIS.

Tom Rasmussen

- Valid protests to the RMP have been sent to state office to answer, then the RMP will be sent to the WO.
- Hope to have the Record of Decision out in September.
 - Public suggestions have been reflected in the plan.

Steve Ellis

- Klamath Falls Interagency Fire Center open house is scheduled for June 7, 2003 at the Kingsley Tanker Base in Klamath Falls.
- Selection will be made this week on the new area manager for Klamath Falls.
- Currently doing prescribed burning.
- Wood River Wetlands-the Bureau of Reclamation is still interested in storing water there.
 - BLM will be meeting in Portland next week on this issue.
 - Water storage not covered in Management Plan.
- Lakeview is working on a Pilot Business Plan on implementation of the RMP.
 - Process may help with funding on RMP.
 - Business plan.
 - The administration would like to take two new RMP's to determine cost and timeline with priorities set for implementation.
 - Allocate dollars to do the plan.
 - WO folks would assist on developing this plan.

Gretchen Burris

- Highway 31 is designated an Outback Scenic Byway.
- BLM is working with the County and Chamber of Commerce to get kiosk along the byway using Forest Service grant dollars.

John Bishop

- Impressed with bureau's efforts to sustain the landscape using fire with green strips.
- Wild horses-we will continue to work on this.

Chad Boyd

- Likes working with BLM on things that are important and not urgent.
- Emerging issues need dealt with too.
 - Helps keep issues from becoming urgent.
- Wondering what we can do to improve horse management.

Dick Leever

- What can and can't be done with the horse management issue through current legislation.
- Suggestion; we need to have Tom Dyer come in and talk about what his national work group has been talking about to help with the horse situation.
 - * *Follow up for September meeting.*
- Invite some other RAC members to sit in on discussions.

Jane O'Keeffe

- Two years ago the BLM Federal Stewardship Unit 2001-2002 Annual Report came out to a group of local folks including, Timber, Industry, National, and Regional Environmentalist.
 - Ecological restoration report shows mixed results.
 - Did not solve every problem.
 - This group has kept local jobs as a priority and \$400,000 in the last two years has gone to local contractors.

Dave Henderson

- Southeast Oregon Resource Management Plan (SEOR-RMP) has gone to press.
 - Vale District opted out on being a pilot on the Implementation Plan.
 - Strategy is to draft up plans on the business strategy and look at Lakeview District to use as model.
 - Plan should be up and running next year and will take on the road.
- Oregon coming up on hard times with land use planning projects (RMP's).
 - Second year in a row projects have not been funded.
 - Starting out year behind of the Forest Service instead of ahead as in the past.

Jill Workman

- First subcommittee formed on this RAC was to work on the SEOR-RMP.
 - This plan has been on the table for 8 years.

Tom Harris

- 1872 mining law has some options with FLPMA.
 - There is a lot of misinformation out.

Marilyn Miller

- Suggestions on ways to promote the RACs and educate the public on what the RACs do.
 - Invite interest groups to RAC meetings.
 - It is the individual RAC members job to advise their constituents on what is going on.
 - RAC public affairs folks need to let the public know what goes on.
 - Need to have newspaper reporters attend RAC meetings so they can do stories in their newspapers.
 - Create brochure that would tell about the RACs.

Joan Suther

- Public meeting dates to work on the Draft Steens RMP.
 - October 27, 2003 in Portland, October 28 in Bend, October 29 in Burns, and October 30 in French Glen.
- Prescribed burning-Forest Service and BLM are doing research plots this round.
 - Fuels strategy planning being worked on large scale where it makes sense to put fuel breaks.
- Three Rivers RMP is currently unfunded-may be 2007 before it is started.

Amy Lott

- Material for the field tour tomorrow was passed out.

Jill Workman

- We can encourage BLM to work with a group to draft legislation to help permanently change laws to deal with the problems in the horse program.
- BLM cannot lobby, but they can assist if asked.
 - BLM can provide information.
- Horse issue is identifying what needs to be fixed.

****Suggestion to get Tom Dyer to speak to this at the next RAC meeting and go from there.***

- He can point out key areas that need attention.
- He has been on the national wild horse and burro team and he knows the latest information on this.
- Learning curve on wild horse and burro issues with BLM and other agencies.

John Bishop

- There may be a difference in needs because of the size of the counties involved- Malheur and Harney County.

Dave Henderson

- Wilderness Study Area's (WSAs) BLM is working on a process for identifying special areas through the land use process. Handbook has been rescinded.

Assignment: Peggy Diegan will get the information that Dave has on the Wilderness Study Area to everyone by e-mail or hard copy if the RAC member does not have email.

Tom Rasmussen

- Lands being inventoried are in current wilderness areas.
- Over and above the initial study lands that were identified were managed as they were wilderness study areas while a plan was being done.
- Wilderness handbook has been pulled.
 - New direction scheduled to come out in June 2003.
- Current policy comes from a Utah settlement.
- Compliance is a huge issue.
- Need someone out there checking every WSA, but not feasible to do this.
- Not consistent in what is done or studied-Dry Creek Gorge is a unique area and it was not made a WSA.

Steve Ellis

- Wood River Wetlands-near Agency Lake-a piece of ground given to BLM in 1994 is land located between a private landowner and the Bureau of Reclamation land.
 - Plan has been done thru the RMP for Klamath.
 - How can we improve habitat for birds, fish, and quality of water going into Agency Lake.
 - Popular area for duck hunters, bird watchers, school nature studies/walks.
 - Klamath tribes and other agencies have dollars invested.
 - BLM wants to protect interest.
 - Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) is always looking for areas to store water for the Klamath reclamation area.
 - BLM has had an agreement with Fish and Wildlife Service in this area for ten years.
 - BOR is pressuring BLM to store water in these wetlands.
 - The primary purpose of the wetlands is habitat.
 - To change the use of this area, the RMP would need to be amended.
 - BLM would need to consult with our partners to do this.

- BLM has advised BOR that this is outside the RMP to use this area for water storage.
- If this area is used for water storage, it will become a mudland area and not a wildlife area.
- Current use meets the objectives of the RMP.
- Water quality and bird use is improving.
- Third request in three months from BOR to use this area for water storage.
- Steve would prefer to see getting rid of land that is under irrigation rather than using this area for water storage.
- Another issue is at Gerber Reservoir the BOR wants to flood our campground.

Question: Can this RAC provide advice because this is in areas of the Lakeview District plus the Winema/Fremont National Forest, which is not within this RACs boundary.

****Peggy will ask Pam Robbins on where the RAC can advise and get the answer back to the RAC members and Federal Officials, do we need to make a charter change to do this-put this on the agenda in September, and if this does come under our jurisdiction the RAC could work on this issue. This is currently outside our RAC boundaries, but still in the Lakeview BLM District and the Winema/Freemont National Forest boundaries.***

FOLLOWUP DFO DISCUSSION

- **Dave Henderson will follow up with Jill Workman and Mike Golden on letter to the BLM to reconsider initiating a new logo.**
- **Ask Tom Dyer to speak to the RAC about issues the Wild Horse and Burro National Work Group is working on.**
- **Peggy Diegan will get the information Dave Henderson has on the Wilderness Study Area to the RAC members.**
- **Peggy Diegan will check with Pam Robbins on the RAC advising the BLM and FS on areas outside of the RAC boundary.**

Steve Ellis

- **Optional fire tour today, May 27 at 4:00 pm, return by 6:00 pm.**

Tom Rasmussen

- **RAC will meet near the Christmas Valley Store at 9:00 am on May 28, 2003 to consolidate vehicles and tour the Lost Forest.**

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 3:45 PM

MAY 28, 2003

SEORAC Tour North Lake County

- See handout #4 which is the tour agenda information.
- Morning Tour.
 - Fossil Lake, North Sand Dunes area, Sand Road, Junipers Camp Area/Sand Dunes for lunch.
 - See handout #3 that includes Lost Forest, Fossil Lake, and Sand Dunes Information.
- Afternoon Tour.
 - Green Mountain.
 - Crack in the Ground